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DUBLIN CASTLE.

The Castle of Dublin was commenced to be built about the year 1205, by Meyler Fitzhenry, Lord Justice, and was finished in 1220, by Henry de Loundres, Archbishop of Dublin. But it was in the reign of Queen Elizabeth that it became the seat of Government—the court was previously held sometimes in the Archbishop's at St. Sepulchres, sometimes at Thomas Court, and sometimes at the Castle of Kilmainham. But the only part of the vice-regal residence which now bears the mark of antiquity is Birmingham Tower, the repository of the public Records of Ireland. All the old towers, bastions and flankers of the old fortress are gone, and have given place to as ordinary and sombre a palace as can well be seen. But Birmingham Tower is an object worthy of arresting the attention of any one interested in Irish history. It was the ancient keep or *ballium*—the stateliest and the strongest tower—of the Anglo-Norman fortress. As such, it was the great state prison, where those Milesian Chieftains were confined when taken prisoners, whose rank and activity rendered them conspicuous in the struggles between the Anglo-Normans and the Irish. Here also were kept in "durance vile" the still more dangerous and troublesome Anglo-Irish lords, whose irregular power was so vexatious to the state as to make it complain that they were "*ipsis Hibernis Hiberniores*;" or in simple English, "more Irish than the Irish themselves!" In this way, has Birmingham tower enclosed, doubtless much against their wills, a Fitzgerald or a Nugent, as well as an O'Neil or an O'Donnell. In the year 1331, Sir William de Birmingham and his son Walter, were committed to the care and keeping of this "strong place,"—the father came out—but to execution, and the son was pardoned because he was in holy orders.

Here was confined Richard, first earl of Westmeath, who, born in captivity, in the Tower of London, where he witnessed the death of his father, Christopher, on his release concocted with O'Neil and O'Donnell, the insurrection which gave occasion to James the First to make the settlement of Ulster. O'Neil and O'Donnell fled beyond sea; Nugent was apprehended, and condemned to die. The day before that fixed for his execution, he, by means of a rope conveyed to him in a basket of oranges, by John Evers his faithful servant, escaped out of a window, and, mounting a fleet horse, got safely to Cloughouter Castle, his island fortress in one of the lakes of Cavan; here he remained safe for some time, in spite of all the rewards offered for his apprehension, until he suddenly made his appearance before the throne of the English monarch, who, in favour of his ingenuous confidence and youthful beauty, pardoned him and restored him to his honours and estates.

The most dangerous antagonist the English Government ever had to contend with in Ireland—Hugh Roe O'Donnell—was also confined here. This enterprising chieftain was the son of Hugh, Chieftain of Tyrconnell; his mother's name was Inneen Duff—"dark Ina"—daughter of Mc Donnell, lord of the Isles; he was born in the year 1571. In early life he not only displayed considerable genius and independence of spirit, but he made these qualities acceptable to his countrymen by the noble generosity of his manners and the matchless symmetry of his form. In former times the O'Donnells of Tyrconnell, and the O'Neils of Tyrone were often addressed by the English monarch as equals, and sometimes called on for aid against foreign foes, and occasionally written to as kings; and it was therefore natural that young Hugh should desire to substantiate his independence, so often acknowledged. He made no secret of his intentions, which were soon the subject of conversation all through Ireland, and reaching the ears of the Lord Justice, created no small alarm at Dublin Castle. Sir John Perrott, then the head of the Irish government, instead of endeavouring to gain over the young chieftain by honours and concession, laid a plot to seize him, which, though successful for the time, was as unworthy as it afterwards proved injurious.

In the year 1587, a ship was fitted out, and stowed with Spanish wine, and directed to sail to one of the harbours of Donegal. Accordingly, the vessel, fraught with the merchandise most acceptable to a Milesian chief, put into Lough Swilly, and cast anchor off the castle of Dundonald, near Rathmillan. The captain, disguised as a Spaniard, proposed to traffic with the people of the fortress, and they, nothing loth, bought and drank until they became intoxicated. The people of the adjoining district did the same, and all the surrounding neeps of O'Donnell, Mc Swiney, and O'Dogherty, entered into olly dealings with the crafty wine merchant. It could not

be supposed that when all were laying in stores of sack and Allcant, the young prince of the country should stay back. No; as was expected, he arrived with his followers at Mc Swiney's castle, who sent the captain notice that his chieftain was arrived, and therefore he must prepare to send some of his very best vintages on shore for his use. The captain replied that what he purposed to sell was already disposed of—but if the young prince would come on board, he would let him taste some of his choicest sack, intended as a present to the lord deputy. This invitation was accepted—the young chief went on board, and he and his followers drank of wine and strong liquor as Irishmen used to drink. When they were all intoxicated, their arms were stolen from them, the hatches were shut down, and next morning saw the vessel clear of Lough Swilly, and on its way for Dublin. Thus was this base design accomplished; and Red Hugh, in his sixteenth year, found himself a captive in Birmingham Tower, where he remained for three years and three months—a long period for a fiery impatient spirit at such a period of life. In the year 1591, he and some of his followers descended by means of a rope on the drawbridge, and getting safe off from the fortress, they escaped towards the Wicklow mountains, and reached the borders of O'Toole's country. There O'Donnell was obliged to stop—his shoes had fallen off his feet, and, passing barefooted through the furze and brakes that covered the hills, he soon broke down, and his companions, consulting their own safety, left him with the one faithful servant, who had assisted him and them to descend from the tower. This man, secreting his master as well as he could, proceeded to the residence of Phelim O'Toole, who also had been a prisoner in Birmingham Tower, and while there, had entered into bonds of friendship with O'Donnell, and a solemn pledge of affection had passed between them. But the O'Toole betrayed his friend; and the young chief heavily chained, and under a stricter ward, was again consigned to his apartment in the tower. A second time, he effected his escape, having, by means of his trusty servant, got down through a shore funnel into the poddle, and creeping along the muddy stream, again took refuge in the Wicklow hills. He did not again trust himself to the O'Toole's, but continuing right on over these high and desolate hills, endeavoured to reach the fastnesses of Feagh Mc Hugh O'Byrne, in Glen Malur. In the early period of their flight, they were separated from Henry O'Neil, who had escaped with him from the prison, and as the night advanced, Arthur O'Neil, another of his companions, who had also escaped from prison, being a heavy and inactive man, was obliged to give over, and he laid down drowsily, and slept the sleep of death. Young O'Donnell got a little further, stationed himself under a projecting rock, in order to shelter himself from the snow hurricanes that swept the hills, and sent his servant to Glen Malur. Feagh Mc Hugh, on the arrival of the servant, sent his people, provided with all possible refreshments and clothes, for the relief of the fugitives. O'Neil was found dead—O'Donnell's young blood was still circulating, but his feet were dreadfully frost-bitten. Every hospitality that the O'Byrne could show to him he did; and when he was able to ride, he forwarded him and his faithful servant, Turlough Buy O'Hogan, on good horses, towards the province of Ulster. On their arrival at the Liffey, they found its usual passes guarded, for the government were on the watch to prevent O'Donnell's escape to his own country. But the Liffey, is, in so many places, fordable that he found no difficulty in passing it, and getting through the plains of Meath. On coming to the Boyne, they were obliged to throw themselves on the patriotic fidelity of a poor fisherman, who not only faithfully ferried them over, but also, with no small courage and address, drove their horses before him as cattle he intended to sell in the north country, and so driving them to where their owners were lying in secret, he furnished them with the means of reaching the hills of Ulster, thus regaining, after five years absence, their own principalities. On Red Hugh's arrival, all the different septs of the country, the O'Donnell, the O'Dogherty, the O'Boyle, and the Mc Swiney, elected him as THE O'DONNELL, in the room of his father, who was now much advanced in years, and willing to resign his government to a bolder and a steadier hand. It would completely go beyond our limits to recount all the adventures of Red Hugh O'Donnell, after he became the head of the various septs of the country. His long imprisonment had given him a cordial hatred of the English—and for a series of years he was the scourge and the terror of the government. He kept his mountain territory of Donegal in spite of Elizabeth's best generals, carried his incursions even to

the remotest parts of Munster, and made his name be respected and his power feared to the very mouth of the Shannon. At last a fatal error—the only military one he was known ever to make, caused by a rivalry between him and O'Neil, about leading an onset—was his ruin. He was totally routed by Lord Mountjoy, at Kinsale—fled to Spain and died in Valladolid in the year 1602.

The only other historic recollection which we can give in this number connected with the Castle, is an account of a judicial combat which took place in the inner court in the year 1583.

Teig Mac Gilpatrick O'Connor having killed some of the followers of Connor Mac Cormack O'Connor, the one O'Connor appealed the other before the Lords Justices. Teig O'Connor pleaded that the men whom he had killed had been confederating with Cahir O'Connor, and were rebels, and said that he was ready to maintain his plea by combat. The challenge was accepted, the defendant chose the weapons, sword and target, and the next day being appointed, the Lords Justices, the Judges, and the Counsellors, all in places appointed for them, with a great concourse of military officers were present to witness the combat. The court was called, the combatants were led forward, according to custom and usage in these trials, stripped to their shirts, oaths were administered that the thought their quarrel just, and on the signal being given by the trumpet, they rushed forward, and began the combat. After a fierce struggle Mac Cormack, receiving two wounds in the leg and one in the eye, attempted to close upon Teig O'Connor, who being too strong for him, so severely punished him, (in modern phrase) or as a knight chivalric would say, pummelled him, that his helmet loosened and so cutting off his head, Teig, in triumph, presented it on the point of the sword to the Lords Justices, who immediately recorded his acquittal.

THE STOLEN SHEEP.

Our readers are all familiar with Sir Walter Scott's "Heart of Mid Lothian," and will recollect the truly touching scene where Jeanie Deans cannot and will not utter what she knows to be false, to save the life of a sister whom she loves as her own soul. It is one of the most masterly of the descriptions of the great "magician of the north," and if a single individual can read it without having every sympathy of his heart aroused, he must be dull if not dead to the finer sensibilities of the soul. But at the same time, we think the "Stolen Sheep," which appeared in the annual for last year called "Friendship's Offering," not unworthy of being placed side by side with the scene in the "Heart of Mid Lothian." There is not an Irishman, at least, who will not feel a strong desire to give the preference to this story, of which we here present an abstract.

Michael Carroll was a poor and honest peasant, whose family were visited with famine and typhus fever at a time when the wide-spread misery of the country rendered assistance from the neighbours nearly hopeless. His wife and a young child died—he himself was attacked by the disease, and on recovering, his weak state and sallow look totally prevented even the possibility of him getting employment. His old father and infant son are starving at home, in their wretched cabin—Michael, desperate, and broken down, steals a sheep, which he kills, and conceals in an out house. It was discovered—Michael was arrested—and his poor old father was taken as a witness against his son!

The assizes soon came on. Michael was arraigned; and, during his plea of "not guilty," his father appeared, unseen by him, in the gaoler's custody, at the back of the dock, or rather in an inner dock. The trial excited a keen and painful interest in the court, the bar, the jury-box, and the crowd of spectators. It was universally known that a son had stolen a sheep, partly to feed a starving father; and that out of the mouth of that father it was now sought to condemn him. "What will the old man do?" was the general question which ran through the assembly; and while few of the lower orders could contemplate the possibility of his swearing to the truth, many of their betters scarce hesitated to make for him a case of actual necessity to swear falsely.

The trial began. The first witness, the herdsman, proved the loss of the sheep, and the finding the dismembered carcass in the old barn. The policemen and steward followed to the same effect, and the latter added the allusions which he had heard the father make to the son, upon the morning of the arrest of the latter. The steward went down from the table. There was a pause, and complete silence, which the

attorney for the prosecution broke by saying to the crier, deliberately, "Call Peery Carroll."

"Here, sir," immediately answered Peery, as the gaoler led him by a side-door, out of the back dock to the table. The prisoner started round; but the new witness against him had passed for an instant into the crowd.

The next instant, old Peery was seen ascending the table, assisted by the gaoler, and by many other commiserating hands, near him. Every glance was fixed on his face. The barristers looked wistfully up from their seats round the table; the judge put a glass to his eye, and seemed to study his features attentively. Among the audience, there ran a low but expressive murmur of pity and interest.

Though much emaciated by confinement, anguish, and suspense, Peery's cheeks had a flush, and his weak blue eyes glittered. The half-gaping expression of his parched and haggard lips was miserable to see. And yet, he did not tremble much, nor appear so confounded as upon the day of his visit to the magistrate.

The moment he stood upright on the table he turned himself fully to the judge, without a glance towards the dock.

"Sit down, sit down, poor man," said the judge.

"Thanks to you, my lord, I will," answered Peery, "only, first, I'd ax you to let me kneel, for a little start;" and he accordingly did kneel, and after bowing his head, and forming the sign of the cross on his forehead, he looked up and said—"My Judge in heaven above, 'tis you I pray to keep me in my duty, afore my earthly judge, this day;—amen;"—and then repeating the sign of the cross, he seated himself.

The examination of the witness commenced, and humanely proceeded as follows—(the council for the prosecution taking no notice of the superfluity of Peery's answers.)

"Do you know Michael, or Michael, Carroll, the prisoner, at the bar?"

"Afore that night, Sir, I believe I knew him well; every thought of his mind, every bit of the heart of his body: afore that night, no living cratur could throw a word at Michael Carroll, or say he ever forgot his father's renown, or his love of his good God;—an' sure the people are after telling you by this time how it came about that night—an' you, my lord,—an' ye gentlemen,—an' all good christians that hear me;—here I am to help to hang him—my own boy, and my only one—but, for all that, gentlemen, ye ought to think of it: it was for the weenock and the old father that he done it; indeed, an' deed we had'n't a pyratee in the place; an' the sickness was amongst us, a start afore; it took the wife from him, and another babby; an' id had himself down a week or so beforehand; an' all that day he was looking for work but couldn't get a hand's turn to do; an' that's the way it was; not a mouthful for me an' little Peery; an', more betoken, he grew sorry for id, in the mornin', an' promised me not to touch a scrap of what was in the barn,—ay, long afore the steward an' the peelers came on us,—but was villin' to go among the neighbours an' beg our breakfast, along wid myself, sooner than touch it.

"It is my painful duty," resumed the barrister, when Peery would at length cease,—“to ask you for further information. You saw Michael Carroll in the barn that night?”

"Musha—The Lord pity him and me—I did, Sir."

"Doing what?"

"The sheep between his hands," answered Peery, dropping his head, and speaking inaudibly.

"I must still give you pain, I fear; stand up; take the crier's rod; and if you see Michael Carroll in court, lay it on his head."

"Och, musha, musha, Sir, don't ax me to do that!" pleaded Peery, rising, wringing his hands, and, for the first time, weeping—"och, don't my lord, don't, and may your own judgment be favourable, the last day."

"I am sorry to command you to do it, witness, but you must take the rod," answered the judge, bending his head close to his own notes, to hide his own tears; and at the same time many a veteran barrister rested his forehead on the table. In the body of the court were heard sobs.

"Michael, avich, Michael, a corra-ma-chree!" exclaimed Peery, when at length he took the rod, and faced round to his son,—“is id your father they make to do it, ma-bouchal."

"My father does what is right," answered Michael, in Irish. The judge immediately asked to have his words translated; and when he learned their import regarded the prisoner with satisfaction.

"We rest here," my lords, said the counsel, with the air of a man free from a painful task.